throat. On the head is a cap of fur, made something in the shape of a turban.

The young girls wear their hair flat on the temples, and twisted in a broad plait behind, interspersed with flowers. The silk jupe reaches to the feet; the bodice is sufficiently open to show an ornamented stomacher; the sleeves are tight to the hands, and a colored scarf, after circling the waist, falls to the feet.

As stays are unknown in these countries, a slim waist is never seen, and a French *élégante* would be shocked at the clumsy tournure of a Wallachian *belle*.

In Lady Craven's "Journal," we have an account of her reception at the Wallachian court. She says, "In the corner sat the prince, dressed and attended *à la Turque;* over his head were ranged the horses' tails, the great helmet and feather, the magnificent sabre, and other arms with which I had seen him parade the streets at Constantinople. * * * * I was then summoned to an audience with the princess: she was sitting *à la Turque*, with three of her daughters by her. There were twenty ladies in the room, one of whom, instead of a turban, had a high cap of sable put behind her hair, that was combed up straight over a kind of roll: this head-dress was far from being ugly or unbecoming. The princess told me that it was a lady of Wallachia, and that the cap was the head-dress of the country."

MYRA BELL; OR, SECOND LOVE.

BY I. W. BRYCE.

CHAPTER I.

"And this I learned, too, from the dove—
To die, and know no second love!"

"THEY tell me, Kate," said Charles Calvert to his beautiful cousin, as they strolled through the flower garden at Oak Lawn, one bright morning in June—"they tell me that young Harry Layton is attentive to Myra Bell."

"Yes, and I certainly wish him success; for my sweet little Myra deserves a good match, and Harry is said, with more reason than is usual in such cases, to be the paragon of the neighborhood."

"You surely do not think such a thing as their engagement possible?"

"And why not, cousin mine? Have you any previous claims to urge upon her heart?"

"By no means. But Myra is a girl, I imagine, who would marry only for love; and, alas! she has no heart to bestow."

"Oh, you allude to her affair with Rupert De Lancey?"

"To be sure I do."

"And do you hold that, because a woman has been jilted by a heartless knave, she may not love a true man?"

"I hold, fair cousin, that, in a sincere bosom, the affections, once blighted and crushed, are not so easily renewed. Nor would an honorable mind like Myra's exchange a broken heart for a loyal and true one."

"I deny your premises, to wit, that Myra's affections are blighted, or that her heart is broken."

"Why, surely she loved De Lancey?"

"Yes; while she found him all that her fancy had painted."

"And would you have her love again, ere one brief year has thrown oblivion over her ill-fated passion? Is such the constancy of woman's heart?"

"Come, no slander upon woman's constancy, or I shall launch forth in full tide of invective against man's treachery. I mean that, because Myra found her idol of clay, it is no reason why the sentiment of devotion, which is one of the holiest instincts of our nature, should be destroyed forever in her breast."

"Then you believe in second love?"

"Your question is not altogether a fair one. I am certainly an advocate of constancy; and there is something very sacred to me even in the memory of a pure and holy affection, which has bright-

ened our happier days, and, long cherished, has entwined itself with our every sympathy, until it grew and became a part of us. The shrine of such a love, once erected in our heart of hearts, may well be dedicated to one only object."

"Then you would have success the criterion of constancy. Why, Kate, you would spoil the prettiest romances that were ever written or acted, by such a cold, calculating sentiment."

"And those same romances have spoiled the happiness of many an honest heart capable of blessing others, and enjoying itself the choicest blessings of life, in its appointed sphere of conjugal and domestic affections. Out upon that false sentiment which condemns a pure and noble heart, with its untold treasures of rich affections and sympathies, to pine in sickly dalliance with despair, because an error of judgment, or a freak of fancy, has sent its devotions to an unworthy object! Must a heart that was made for love wither, in its spring-time of freshness and bloom, from treachery or disappointment? Forbid it, every principle of rational happiness, of true and purified enjoyment!"

"But does not your doctrine, fair cousin, tend to impair that faith in the constancy of love which gives it ideal charms, and elevates it into a worship?"

"On the contrary, it rather vindicates the sentiment as too pure and holy to suffer from treachery and deceit; of too divine and immaculate a nature to perish, when baffled, like baser passions."

"You argue well, Kate; but yet there is a charm in changeless love that still holds the imagination captive."

"And did I speak of true love as changeable, Charles? I only contended against the despotic rule of what I think a false sentiment. The constancy of mutual love is beautiful and holy in my eyes; and where our affections have met a full response in the sympathies of a congenial heart, and especially where we have been blessed with its long companionship, I hold a second love as great a sacrilege as yourself, though I will not deny that it may exist."

"Well, well, my sweet cousin, you and I will not quarrel about love; nor pretty Myra Bell either, for whom I wish a bright and happy fate. But see, John has brought the horses round. Shall we take our gallop as usual? I promise not to cast one wistful glance at Myra Bell's handsome cottage as we pass," said Charles, with a playful emphasis.

"Out upon you, Mr. Impudence!" replied his cousin, blushing slightly, and tapping him with her whip, for she was equipped for the ride. "What wonderful magic, think you, there lies in *your* glances?"

Leaving the cousins to their morning ride, and to renew their edifying discussion, if they pleased, we will look into as lovely a little cottage as was ever the abode of innocence, peace, and happiness.

In a neatly furnished apartment, from which, through the latticed casement, you might look out on the prettiest imaginable little flower garden, were two persons. The one a man advanced in years, of mild, calm, and dignified appearance, whose broad, intellectual brow was unwrinkled, save by the lines of thought, and the lustre of whose dark eye was undimmed, though the snows of winter were fast covering his fine classic head. Adam Bell was a scholar, and somewhat of a dreamer, yet, withal, a very deep philosopher. The vanities of earth he despised, while he cherished, with assiduous care, those gentle sentiments, true feelings, and noble sympathies which minister to the peace and happiness of the heart far more surely than the false excitement of pleasure and ambition. In early life he had married happily, prospered in the world, and enjoyed those flattering promises of the future with which Fortune so often tempts us to essay the perilous "heights where Fame's proud temple lies;" but reverses and disappointments soon taught him their lesson. The loss of fortune, and the ill health of his beloved companion, induced him to retire, not a soured misanthrope, but a sobered philosopher, from the pomps and vanities of the world. Husbanding his remaining resources, he purchased the quiet cottage where he now resided, and where he had enjoyed years of supreme bliss with his adored wife, who faded gently and quietly from his side, like a cherished flower, exhaling the fragrance of her long and devoted love to surround him in the gentle affections of an only and most beautiful daughter.

In such a death there was no shock; and the sadness caused by his bereavement was so sweetly mingled with the hope of a reunion hereafter, as to rob his grief of half its poignancy. In Myra he beheld—each lineament and feature complete—the counterpart of her whose memory he adored; and, for his daughter, he was content to live on, that he might guard and shield her youth from care, and pluck, as far as might be, the thorns of disappointment and sorrow from her future pathway. And now, as he sat at the open casement, through which the fresh morning air came, apparently intent on his book, his eye wandered, ever and anon, from the bright flowers without to the brighter being within, who glided noiselessly about the room, occupied with her domestic affairs, and unconscious of the thoughtful attention which was bestowed upon her. It was not without uneasiness that Adam Bell noticed an air of preoccupation, and almost sadness, in his sweet daughter, and a keen pang shot through his heart as he heard the half-smothered sigh which escaped her.

"Come here, Myra," said he, "and see how your favorite rose tree has revived from last night's shower."

Awakening from the rather unpleasant reverie which had been gradually stealing over her, with scarce an effort, Myra dispelled the shadows from her brow, and, her face beaming with affection placed herself on a low stool at her father's feet.

"Oh, how beautiful!" she exclaimed. "I did

not think my poor rose-bush would bloom again this summer."

"Blight or bloom upon the flower, or the human heart, are His, who ever deals gently with the tenderest," said the old man, reverently.

"I feel it, my father," answered his daughter, gazing fondly in his face with tearful eyes, blue as the violet whose perfume they enjoyed.

"And yet, Myra, you are sad. Are you sure there is no drop of bitterness left in that young heart to rankle hereafter?"

"Quite sure, dear father; although some sadness is natural to the heart which finds its ideal destroyed. And yet I think no more of *him*."

"Say not its ideal destroyed, but its idol a false one, my child. That mental standard of perfection which we set up as the model of all that is worthy and noble in human character, and which we call our ideal, is formed rather by our own sentiments and feelings than from any experience or example of human nature which is before us; yet it is the very foundation of all our respect or admiration for our fellow-beings, the key to love and friendship, and sad is the heart whose ideal is destroyed! But, my dear Myra," continued the fond parent, somewhat more playfully, "if not of him—the base, the worthless—of whom was my daughter thinking so pensively, almost sadly?"

There was perfect confidence between the father and daughter; yet the eyes of Myra drooped an instant, and the rich color suffused her face, such is the sensibility of a pure young heart to the exposure of its feelings, even to the eye of affection.

"Nay, I did not mean to startle or grieve you; but you cannot suppose, my own darling, that, in aught which touches your happiness, my eyes slumber. There, that blush has answered me; and I may give Harry Layton a favorable answer," said Adam Bell, bending to caress the beautiful head that rested on his lap.

At this moment the sound of horses' feet was heard in the avenue that led from the high road, and the bark of Myra's little spaniel, who was basking in the sunshine on the front verandah, announced early visitors.

"Come, my love, there is your friend Kate. I saw her pass, in company with her cousin, half an hour since, and doubtless she is coming to pay you a morning call. Hie to your chamber, and smooth down those troubled thoughts, while I receive them."

It was, indeed, Kate and Charles, the former having remembered, during their ride, that she had not yet invited Myra to a *fête* which was to be given the next week on the occasion of her birthday. She therefore insisted upon her cousin accompanying her, "even at the risk," she said, in playful badinage, "of exposing poor little Myra to the dangerous glances of such a wonderful lady-killer."

They were received with a dignified courtesy and kind welcome by Adam Bell, which Charles afterwards declared to exhibit the most distinguished demeanor he ever met with; and, in a few minutes, Myra appeared, blooming as one of her own beautiful roses, to greet her friend, and to receive Charles, without the slightest embarrassment.

The invitation was given, and, after a glance at her father, who signified his approval, accepted by Myra; and, after spending an hour very pleasantly, the cousins took their departure.

In the evening Harry Layton came, conferred a few moments with Adam Bell in his library, and then, in company with him, joined Myra in the parlor the happiest of men. The old man, with his book, soon drew off to his corner, and left the young lovers to that elysium which they, who have once felt it, know beggars all description.

CHAPTER II.

Rupert De Lancey was a young man of good birth, ample fortune, and considerable intellect. Though proud and ambitious, he possessed courteous and affable manners, which won him more regard than his character really deserved, and made him, where no occasion forced the display of his real nature, a universal favorite. His person was even more attractive than his demeanor, for he possessed the highest order of masculine beauty. A broad and prominent forehead, somewhat narrower, however, at the temples than was consistent with perfect symmetry, around which curled, in short, natural ringlets, his rich and glossy brown hair; dark blue eyes, of sparkling brilliancy, in which only the practiced regard of a physiognomist could have detected the wavering, vacillating glance which denoted fickleness of purpose; a mouth indicative of firmness, as well as great sensibility, but the character of which also expressed great voluptuousness, especially in connection with his rather fleshy and projecting chin; and a nose slightly aquiline, with finely-curved nostrils, made up a face unusually prepossessing. De Lancey had been educated with high sentiments of honor, and would have reprobated deceit and treachery as soon as any one; but, with many a great and noble quality, he was beset with the weaknesses of pride and vanity, and their almost inseparable concomitant, changeableness of purpose; for, where they demand a sacrifice, strong must be the mind, and firm the heart, which refuses it.

Such was he who won the first regards of Myra Bell. Upon the guileless nature of her father, who, with all his experience, could never learn suspicion, the frank, free manners, and pleasing exterior of the youth had early made an impression, which paved the way to unrestrained social intercourse, and thus gave him the opportunity of enjoying much of Myra's society. It was not vanity alone which made Rupert her admirer, or induced him to seek her heart, no one, with a touch of gentle feeling at his heart, could have witnessed unmoved her ex-

panding beauties of mind and person. Nor was it the mere fascination of the eye, nor the graceful flatteries of his constant homage, which charmed Myra; her esteem was won through her father's incautious praise. And, although no formal engagement existed between them, yet their future union was looked on as a matter of course, not only by Myra's father, but by friends and acquaintances, and even the relations of Rupert, who, though not altogether satisfied with the match, offered no opposition.

The awakening of Myra Bell from her first dream of love was sad and bitter, indeed; but less painful and enduring was the blight that fell upon her heart under the strengthening influence of her father's wise, Christian philosophy, and gentle, soothing counsels. The desertion of Rupert De Lancey, like his wooing, was not so pointed as to leave him without a plausible defence of his conduct, and would not have afforded even the watchful father an excuse to tax him with his treachery, but for the occasion of some light raillery on the part of his gay companions, to which, in a fit of pique and vanity, he replied, scornfully—

"What, the old bookworm's rustic daughter! She is no bride for Rupert De Lancey!"

It is true, he was ashamed of such unbecoming language almost as soon as he uttered it; but, if he repented, he could not forego the treacherous purpose at his heart. Another passion had taken possession of his soul. His vanity and his ambition had both been excited, and he was ready to sacrifice faith, and truth, and love, such as he was capable of feeling, upon their altar, even though he crushed the life out of that gentle heart which had trusted its happiness to his keeping. And what was the cause of this change? The arrival of Kate Welden, a beauty, an heiress, and a distinguished *belle*, at the mansion of her uncle, Colonel Warren, of Oak Lawn.

Kate was an orphan, and had resided, since the death of her parents, with her guardian in the city; but, on the occasion of that gentleman and his family taking a foreign tour, she accepted the invitation of her uncle, Colonel Warren, to make his house her home, as she did not wish to accompany them. She was just of age, and there were, of course, no objections on the part of the former guardian, and, turning over to her the immense estate he had managed honorably and well, and of which she appointed her uncle her agent, he resigned his charge.

Fame heralded the advent of the heiress, and among the most eager to lay his homage at her feet was Rupert De Lancey. His vanity had always led him to wish to be first among his companions, and he could not bear the thought that so brilliant a prize should fall to another. Perhaps even his admiration for Myra was not free from this governing sentiment, for she was certainly the *belle* of the neighborhood before Kate Welden came, and many still thought her title to that distinction unimpaired. The two young ladies, however, instead of experiencing feelings of rivalship, became fast and affectionate friends.

From the time when Rupert made the ungenerous and ungentlemanly speech about Myra, as if conscious that his own baseness was known to her, he ceased his usual visits; and, the remark coming to the ears of Adam Bell, the old man sought an interview, from which De Lancey would fain have shrunk, if he dared. The conduct of the father on that painful occasion was calm, dignified, and open, while that of the recreant lover was full of prevarication and shuffling, though his language was plausible and respectful.

"Young man, you say there was no positive engagement between yourself and my daughter. This, perhaps, is true; but when you tell me you never sought her affections under the guise of love, that you never taught her to look upon you in any other light than that of a very dear friend, you utter a falsehood which your own conscience condemns."

"Most happy would I be, sir, to make any sacrifice which would convince you of my truth, or contribute to your daughter's peace of mind, which I regret that one so worthless as I should have injured, however unintentionally," said Rupert, in a slight tone of mockery. "And, as for the idle words I uttered"——

"Peace, sir! there is no sacrifice that would be accepted. My daughter would scorn your hand now as I do your character. And, for myself, I would sooner lay her young head in the grave than consign her to the arms of a villain whose smooth brow and oily tongue conceal so base and lying a heart!"

"Sir!" exclaimed De Lancey, in fierce passion, for the taunt stung him to the quick. "But for your age"——

"Peace, again I say, fool! It is not my age, but conscious guilt, that paralyzes your heart. Yet go! I would not forget that I am a Christian as well as a father. Adam Bell despises and forgives you, and his daughter will do the same."

Rupert De Lancey did not linger; and, for a long time, the bitterness of that interview, to which were truly added the pangs of conscience, wrung his heart.

Poor Myra! the cloud which obscured the fair horizon of her hopes was dark indeed, and the night of her despair, if brief, was full of agony; but, thanks to him who educated her heart in a truer school of philosophy than is taught by idle romance, and to HIM who "tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," the cup of bitterness passed from her, and the false light she had worshiped faded from her vision, which became calmer and clearer from the storm that had broken over her. It was at this period that she met Harry Layton, and the mysterious growth of true love sprung at once in her heart, whose best affections seemed of late blighted and withered. It was long before Myra would acknowledge to herself the interest he inspired, and she trembled at her own emotions as she asked herself

the nature of that interest. Notwithstanding the precepts of her father, she shrunk from what almost appeared the *sacrilege* of second love, and that so soon after the deep disappointment of her first choice. But all her doubts were soon resolved; and when Harry poured forth, in the genuine eloquence of true feeling, the story of his devotion, how different seemed his language, how much more sincere and manly, than the strained compliments and sugared flatteries with which Rupert De Lancey had amused her young fancy!

And, with the thought of him, came a sinking of the heart she had never before felt. "Would Harry Layton, so good and noble himself, be content to take her affections second-hand from such a source?"

"No, no, Harry!" she said, and tears almost choked her utterance. "You could not value a heart that had already loved and been scorned."

"Never, Myra, did you truly love that base, unmanly wretch! Fear not; I know all. It was only your fancy which his facile address captivated; your heart was untouched, save with devotion for its own ideal, which for a moment he seemed to fill. Fear not, dear Myra; be but mine, and you shall soon learn of me that you never truly loved him."

The lesson was a pleasant one both to master and pupil, fulfilling the former's promise indeed.

And how sped the wooing of Rupert De Lancey? How prospered his suit to the fair Kate? Unfortunately for him, the citadel of her heart had long since yielded to her cousin, Charles Calvert, to whom, with the full approbation of their uncle, whose favorite and heir he was, she was already betrothed; and, still more unfortunately, even had she been "fancy free," with that knowledge which experience alone can give, and that nice sagacity which characterizes the female perception, she had measured the depths of his character, and appreciated him accordingly. Moreover, his treachery to Myra was not unknown to her.

Kate Welden was a girl of bold and daring spirit, although her heart was full of tender sensibilities; and, while she was true and steadfast in her affections, her conduct sometimes suffered in the estimation of those who look not beneath the surface for one's intentions. Thus she not unfrequently subjected herself to the imputation of coquetry, when she had only resolved to punish some vain and presumptuous coxcomb who had victimized one of her sex. This same determination she had taken in regard to De Lancey, and, though Charles Calvert did not altogether approve of her intention, he was by no means jealous, but only sought to dissuade her from motives of prudence in regard to her own reputation.

"Go along, Cousin Charles, and flirt with every pretty face in the county, if you please; but let me alone to punish this knave, which I am determined to do."

"Is there not some vanity in that, fair cousin mine?"

"By no means, my gentle mentor. It is not my poor beauty, but my rich estate which captivates him. And, as for the damage to my reputation by coquetry, which you are so kind as to hint at, why you must e'en marry me the sooner, and take it under your own charge, if you are apprehensive about it."

"That is certainly an irresistible bribe to let you play the madcap once more," said Charles, gallantly. "So it must be as you choose."

Thus stood matters on the evening of the *fête* at Colonel Warren's, save that Kate had received several calls from De Lancey very graciously, and, without exactly encouraging him, certainly allowed him to go off with a very self-satisfied notion of his probable success.

CHAPTER III.

THE *fête* at Colonel Warren's was a splendid and brilliant one, indeed. The spacious halls of his large, elegant mansion were beautifully decorated, and lighted to perfection. The exquisite gardens were hung with colored lamps, and, with the graveled walks and commodious summer-houses, afforded a pleasant retreat from the heat and glare of the rooms to those who were fatigued with dancing, or desirous of a quiet *tête-à-tête*. A gay and happy assemblage of bright and cheerful faces did honor to the birthday of the fair Kate Welden; and, with music and dance, and innocent revelry, the joyous hours sped rapidly on. Many a charming face was there, and many a graceful form glided through the mazes of waltz or cotillion; but peerless above all others were the two friends, Kate Welden and Myra Bell.

Each was the type of a different style of beauty, and almost faultless was the model. Dark as the raven's wing was the glossy hair braided over the full intellectual brow of Kate; while the auburn tresses of Myra fell in luxuriant ringlets from her small, beautiful head. Black eyes, that flashed with fire, or melted in languor, and a rich olive complexion, through which the mantling blood showed like the blush on the sunny side of a ripe peach, characterized the splendid beauty of the one; while the blended lily and rose tints, with orbs of calm and heavenly blue, distinguished the soft and winning loveliness of the other. The former was tall and stately as Juno, the latter light and graceful as Hebe Many a tribute of admiration did they elicit, and much difference of opinion did their appearance excite as to the respective merit of their different styles. No one, perhaps, viewed them with more indescribable emotion than Rupert De Lancey—not even Charles Calvert or Harry Layton, who had become friends and confidants. A strange and mixed feeling of hope and regret stole over him.

"After all," mused he, "if I am disappointed of the heiress, what a prize have I lost! The more lovely, far the more lovely, of the two. True, the

other is a splendid creature; but there is something too fierce and haughty in her beauty: while my own Myra is an angel, if there ever was one on earth. I wonder if there is anything in that young Layton's attentions? Pshaw! No! She cannot have forgotten me so soon; though I do not half like her manner to-night—it is too calm and self-possessed. There is neither love nor the sense of injury in her cool eye when it encounters mine; yet on Layton she bestows the same look of quiet confidence that once was mine. By Heaven, I could not brook that fellow's rivalry! Yet, what claim have I? To me she is lost forever! Nay, not so; if the heiress jilts me, which I half wish she would, and half think she may, from certain indications to-night, I will recant my errors, and throw myself at Myra's feet for forgiveness, and be happy in her dear love, which I never knew till now had so deep a hold on my heart."

And, in this uncertain mood, De Lancey sought the side of Kate Welden, from whom a gracious reception awaited him. To his proposal that they should seek the cool air of the gardens, she yielded a flattering assent; and, when they had reached a remote arbor, she seated herself, and, without speaking to her companion, turned her large eyes, full of soft languor, upwards, to gaze at that peerless orb which poets delight to apostrophize, and lovers to look on.

"A lovely night!" said De Lancey, breaking the silence, in a low, musical voice.

"And a night for love!" responded Kate, half soliloquizing.

"Then, brightest and most beautiful, accept its sincere homage from your most devoted admirer!" breathed Rupert, passionately, as he sank gracefully to his knee.

"Sir! Mr. De Lancey!" cried Kate, starting back.

"Nay, dearest Kate, hear me! I love, I adore you! From the first moment your glorious beauty burst upon my sight, I have been your captive! Yet not the captive of your beauty alone, but equally enamored of the bright intellect which beams from those eloquent eyes!"

"You make love well, Mr. De Lancey," said Kate, dryly.

"Nay, cruel girl, would you mock me? Are you, indeed, the heartless coquette fame speaks of, who can sport in the agony of a true heart?"

"Of a true heart, never! Its lightest sorrow, caused through conduct of mine, would grieve me deeply."

"Then, why this derision of my love? Why thus scorn the proffer of an honorable passion from me?"

"Because yours is not a true heart! Think of Myra Bell!"

"Ah! is it that idle story which stands between me and my hopes? Believe me, I never wronged her. A mere child, with whom I had been in daily intercourse for years, who conceived a foolish attachment for me, which I was the first to undeceive her of. Nay, dearest Kate," continued he, seeing she had relaxed somewhat of her sternness; "it was I, not she, who suffered from the *contretemps*. Credit no word of it; but believe me that never—no, never—was my heart touched by love till by the magic of your loveliness! Be mine, beautiful creature, and the ardent devotion of a life shall repay the rich boon you grant! If there be anything worthy or noble in my soul, as I have dreamed there is, be it yours to call it forth and direct it to great objects; and to you, my inspiration and my hope, shall be dedicated all the triumphs of my future career!"

He paused, and, perceiving his fair listener drooped, as if with suppressed emotion, believed he had conquered. With rapture, he caught her hand, and was about to pour forth his thanks, when it was promptly snatched away, and, with a wild, gay laugh, Kate sprung up from her seat.

"Ha! ha! Mr. De Lancey, now I understand you! It is only a private rehearsal you are treating me to. Pray, sir, when do you make your first appearance? I shall certainly attend; for you give great promise of success. What is to be your character, Claude Melnotte or the Apostate?"

"Enough, lady!" said Rupert, rising, in ill-concealed rage and disappointment. "Crush me no more with your scorn! Believe it was a mere play of gallantry, if you will."

There was a depth of anguish in his voice which made Kate half repent her conduct, and she turned to speak with some purpose of softening the blow; but he was gone. When she again met him in the hall, the almost kindly glance of her eye, in answer to his deprecating look—for Kate felt some remorse at the part she had played—reassured him; and Rupert De Lancey became once more the bright and fascinating cavalier, who, it would scarcely be thought, would plead in vain to beauty.

There are some hearts upon which no salutary lesson can be impressed, when vanity and selfishness urge them on, and moral principle is wanting to control their desires. Such was Rupert's. The failure of his designs upon the hand of Kate Welden, and the mortifying exposure he had endured, did not deter him, the moment he believed her silence secure, from pursuing purposes in regard to Myra, in the event of his ill success with the heiress.

It was the first time they had met since the unhandsome conduct of Rupert, and, if he expected any weakness on the part of Myra, he was greatly mistaken. Her reception of him—for she did not pretend to avoid him—was calm, quiet, and ladylike. No emotion betrayed itself in cheek or glance; and, as he expressed it to himself, there was "neither love nor the sense of injury in her cool eye, when it encountered his." Yet the vanity of Rupert De Lancey would not be convinced that *he* could be so soon forgotten. When he again approached Myra, she was talking to Charles Calvert.

"Will Miss Bell favor me with her hand for a cotillion?" he asked, in his blandest tones.

"If you wish it," she replied, quietly.

"Can you doubt it?" And he bent a meaning glance upon her, as he offered his arm.

"Not the present set," said Myra, carelessly, without replying either to look or word; "I am engaged to Mr. Calvert. The one after, if you choose."

With eager and animated regards, Rupert watched her through the dance; and, when he claimed her hand at the close of the set, he thought she never looked half so beautiful.

But few moments were allowed for conversation ere the music again struck up, and the requisitions of the dance, with the unwillingness of his partner to listen to anything of the past, gave De Lancey but little chance to urge his suit. When the cotillion had finished, however, he proposed to get an ice for her, and Myra, having really no other engagement, and seeing no familiar face near her, could not well refuse. Fate favored De Lancey, for the door near which they stood opened on a small vine-covered portico, with convenient seats, and they had scarcely placed themselves, before a movement in the crowd left that part of the room vacant, and they were once more alone.

To say that Myra Bell felt perfectly at her ease would be too much, for she had already perceived, on the part of her companion, a purpose to enter into some explanation, which she would gladly have avoided. It is true, she thoroughly despised him now; but there are memories of love which, even when the passion has faded, and the object is scorned, cannot be altogether destroyed. Poor Myra, however, had no choice, and could only nerve her heart for the trial she would fain have been spared.

"Myra," said Rupert, in his dulcet voice, when he perceived they would be uninterrupted.

"Sir," with calm dignity, "to other than my near friends, I am Miss Bell."

"And are we enemies, Myra?"

"It needs not a distinction, sir, which would argue more importance in the feelings between us than I am disposed to admit. We are strangers, sir, or, if you please, mere acquaintances."

"Strangers, Myra! Can it be that such a wide gulf is between hearts once so fondly knit together?"

"And who made it, sir?" demanded she, with rising scorn.

"The rash, intemperate passion of your father, and perhaps my own foolish pride," replied he, with bold hypocrisy.

"'Tis false! Your own base, fickle nature alone was to blame," said she, rising with dignified mien and flashing eye, her slight form swelling into heroic proportions. "But cease these insulting importunities. Let me pass!"

"Nay, Myra, you must hear me; though for the last time," said he, with subdued and touching pathos, respectfully and gently detaining her. "Think you that a rash word, or a hasty action, should destroy forever the brightest hopes of the human heart—the first dream of pure, unchanging love? Is that exalted and divine passion so weak that it cannot withstand a moment's anger—just anger at a grievous fault, perhaps—against the object of its devotion? Has forgiveness no part in its principles? Must a single error doom the heart that has loved truly and fondly for years to misery and despair? Nay, hear me!" continued he, passionately, for she made an impatient movement to be gone. "I love you! I have always loved you! In bitterness and anguish have I repented my fault. In wretchedness must I pass the brief period of my life, if you will not listen to and forgive me. My own, my adored Myra! hear, and answer me!"

And, as she strove to pass him, he sank on his knees and caught her hand to detain her.

"Do hear the gentleman out, my love," said a clear, silvery voice near them at this moment. "But you need not trouble yourself to answer him; for it is only some private theatricals he has gotten up to assist my poor entertainment to-night. He has already gone through the self-same scene with me in the garden to-night!" And Kate Welden stepped forward.

Who can picture the debasement of feeling that overwhelmed Rupert De Lancey at this interruption? Releasing the hand he had taken, he bowed his head in shame and humiliation, while Myra, glad of escape, took refuge at the side of her friend.

"Come, dear," said the gay girl, leading her away. "Let us leave him to study some more interesting character; his present one is somewhat 'stale and unprofitable.'"

And, when they had gone, Rupert De Lancey rushed madly from the house, his brain on fire and his heart like ice.

Whether the lessons he received have corrected the faults of his character we do not know, for he shortly left the neighborhood, as it was said, on "a foreign tour." We scarcely think the school a good one; and, perhaps, when he returns, he will only add another to the empty-headed fops who ape the follies, not the virtues, of European society, and are American in nothing but their birth, which they affect to despise.

The same day saw Kate Welden and Myra Bell united to those they had chosen both from love and esteem. Kate passed much of her time in the great city, where she was still acknowledged as an ornament to the society in which she moved; but ever the bright summer hours found her again at Oak Lawn, or the favorite guest of the "dear little cottage," where her "sweet Myra" lived, in the unbroken and unregretting happiness of SECOND LOVE.